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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 5778

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PINT PO
SUBJECT: THE CRISIS: GETTING A DIALOGUE GOING

1. I AM INCREASINGLY CONCERNED THAT AS OF TODAY THE PRINCIPAL PLAYERS IN THE CURRENT CRISIS ARE NOT TALKING TO EACH OTHER. WHILE MOST SEEM TO AGREE THAT A COOLING OFF PERIOD IS DESIRABLE--ESPECIALLY IN THE EANES/SOARES RELATIONSHIP--THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT GIVEN THE PARTIES MUCH TIME TO COME UP WITH AN INTERPARTY AGREEMENT AS THE NECESSARY CONSTITUTIONAL AND PARLIAMENTARY BASE FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT. I BELIEVE IT ESSENTIAL THAT A REAL DIALOGUE BEGIN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

2. I LUNCHED WITH DEFENSE MINISTER FIRMINO MIGUEL (AN INDEPENDENT WHO HAS SERVED IN BOTH THE SOARES CABINETS, A MAN WITH CONSIDERABLE PRESTIGE AMONG THE THREE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES, AND A EANES CONFIDANT) AND EXPECT TO SEE CDS LEADER FREITAS DO AMARAL TOMORROW. IN ADDITION, I WILL BE MEETING WITH SOARES WITHIN THE NEXT FORTY-EIGHT HOURS.

3. MIGUEL SAID THAT HE WAS DISAPPOINTED BY THE SOCIALISTS' RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT EANES' SPEECH TO THE NATION. HE CHARACTERIZED THE RESPONSE AS TOUGH AND UNPROMISING.
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HE SAID THAT SOARES AND THE SOCIALISTS WERE OBVIOUSLY WOUNDED BY THE PRESIDENT'S DISMISSAL OF SOARES. HE SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS ALSO FEELING RESENTFUL TOWARD THE SOCIALISTS FOR THEIR UNWILLINGNESS TO MAKE A POSITIVE RESPONSE TO HIS INITIATIVE. AS WE EXPLORED THE VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES FOR FORMING A NEW GOVERNMENT WITHIN THE GUIDELINES SET FORTH BY THE PRESIDENT, IT

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BECAME OBVIOUS THAT MIGUEL WAS NOT PRIVY TO THE INFORMATION WE HAD RECEIVED FROM RUI MATEUS THAT THE SOCIALISTS WOULD REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN A GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE. WITHOUT DIVULGING THAT INFORMATION, I INDICATED THAT OUR INTERPRETATION OF THE SOCIALIST POSITION AS OF TODAY WAS THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT THEY WOULD AGREE TO PARTICIPATE.

4. MIGUEL SAID THAT GIVEN THE WOUNDED FEELINGS ON BOTH SIDES IT WAS TOO EARLY FOR A NEW DIALOGUE BETWEEN EANES AND SOARES BUT THAT HE WAS HEPEFUL THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD TAKE SUCH AN INITIATIVE IN A FEW DAYS. WHEN I OBSERVED THAT IN THE INTERIM THE SITUATION COULD DETERIORATE EVEN FURTHER, HE REFLECTED FOR A MOMENT AND THEN SAID THAT HE WOULD GET IN TOUCH WITH SOARES TONIGHT AND OFFER HIS SERVICES AS AN INTERMEDIARY. HE SAID HE WOULD APPEAL TO SOARES' PATRIOTISM (AND INCIDENTALLY TO HIS EGO). WHILE I AM NOT SANGUINE THAT THE SOCIALISTS WILL CHOOSE TO USE MIGUEL FOR THIS PURPOSE, GIVEN HIS IDENTIFICATION AS AN EANES MAN, THE INITIATIVE ON HIS PART IS AT LEAST BETTER THAN NOTHING.

5. INCIDENTALLY MIGUEL, WHO HAS BEEN MENTIONED FREQUENTLY AS A POSSIBLE CHOICE FOR PRIME MINISTER IN A PRESIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT, CONFIRMED WHAT HENRIQUE GRANADEIRO TOLD ME YESTERDAY, NAMELY THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD NAME A MILITARY
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MAN AS PRIME MINISTER ONLY AS A LAST RESORT.

6. IN MY UPCOMING MEETINGS WITH FREITAS DO AMARAL AND SOARES I INTEND TO APPEAL TO BOTH TO PUT ASIDE FEELINGS OF BITTERNESS OVER RECENT EVENTS AND TO MAKE AN ACTIVE EFFORT TO FIND A SOLUTION THAT WILL RESULT IN A VIABLE, PARLIAMENTARY-SUPPORTED GOVERNMENT.
BLOOMFIELD

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